



An Association of Professors, Practitioners,  
and Researchers in Religious Education  
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30 October 2018

**REA Statement on the Synagogue Attack in Pittsburgh**

The Religious Education Association (REA) is shocked and saddened by the recent vicious attack on Sabbath worshippers at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. We pray for the healing of those who were injured at the hands of the gunman and send our heartfelt condolences to those who lost loved ones. And we grieve with the Jewish community of Pittsburgh. In the words of the traditional Jewish blessing for a house of mourning: "May God send you comfort among mourners for Zion and Jerusalem and may you never again know sorrow."

The REA condemns this heinous act of antisemitism unequivocally. It stands in solidarity with the Jewish people in the United States and around the world at this trying time and with believers and unbelievers everywhere who reject hatred and affirm the value of every human life.

The rabbis taught that one human being was created in the beginning so that no one could justifiably say that my ancestor is greater than your ancestor, since everyone has the same ancestor, and to teach that destroying a single soul is equivalent to destroying an entire world, whereas saving a single soul is equivalent to saving an entire world, since the whole of humanity descends from a single soul (Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5).

We call upon leaders and opinion makers the world over to seek an end to all forms of antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism, and intolerance and to promote diverse, inclusive societies in the spirit of the Abrahamic prophets, where every person dwells peacefully in his or her own vineyard and every community under its particular fig tree, and none makes them afraid (Micah 4:4); where the peacemakers are blessed, because they are the children of God (Mathew 5:9); and where enmity and hatred of others makes no one avoid justice (Quran 5:8).

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